

THE REFORMER AND CHRISTIAN.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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LEGISLATIVE CHAPLAINS, &c.

New York Legislature, April 16, 1832.

Mr. Moulton, from a majority of the select committee, to whom were referred twenty-six memorials from various parts of the state, relative to the employment of chaplains by the legislature, and the payment for their services from the public money—with the unanimous consent of the house, submitted a long report, adverse to the constitutionality of the practice—concluding with a recommendation that that part of the revised statutes providing for the payment of chaplains appointed by the legislature, be repealed; in conformity with the provisions of a bill, introduced at this session by the chairman of the committee. Accompanying the report, were the following resolutions, intended to apply to other subjects embraced in the several memorials referred to the committee:

Resolved, That all legislation on Religion, other than pursuant to the constitution, to secure to "all mankind within the state, without discrimination or preference," the free and unmolested enjoyment of the rights of opinion and of free discussion, is unjust, unauthorised, and unconstitutional.

Resolved, That all existing laws by which any person within this state is coerced, against his conscientious opinions, to conform to the religious creeds or doctrines of others, are unconstitutional, nugatory, and ought to be repealed.

Resolved, That to obstruct the public streets or highways with iron chains or other impediments to the free use thereof on Sunday or any other day, is an exercise of power without right,

and ought to be interdicted under proper and effectual penalties.

[A friend has sent us the entire Report of the committee, published in pamphlet form, making sixteen pages octavo, with a request to insert it in the Reformer. As able and interesting as the whole Report is, and as much as we could wish it in the hands of every person, its length renders it inconvenient to give it entire, and we must content ourselves with the following selected passages.]

Knowing that a great contrariety of opinions are entertained, and that numerous and conflicting prejudices exist in the minds of many honest and zealous religious sectarians on the subject treated on in the said memorials; and being aware that the due discharge of the duties assigned to the committee, requires them to explore ground which, by some persons, is deemed *holy*, and to disturb questions which, by many, have long been regarded as fully and righteously settled; the committee have examined the subjects referred to them with all that candour and circumspection which they deem consistent with their duties to their constituents—the due exercise of their own rights of conscience, and their disposition to treat the opinions of their fellow men with all that deference and respect to which, by the law of equal rights and the provisions of the constitution of the civil government of the state, they are entitled.

Your committee have not deemed it necessary or useful, on the present occasion, to grope amidst the ignorance and superstition of the darker ages, to discover the origin or utility of legislative prayers—nor to learn what nations *have*, or what have *not* practised them; nor to ascertain whe-

ther the custom was derived from human or divine authority. The "march of mind" must have progressed to a very limited extent, and to very little useful purpose, if the civil and religious liberties of the people of this country were to be ascertained and measured by the opinions and customs of mankind in remote ages and in other nations, and under governments as dissimilar in their principles and character to those of our own country, as they were incompatible with the equal rights of man. Yet, amidst all the heterogeneous details of falsehood, fable, and fact, which constitute the history of man, of nations, and of governments, there are no truths more clearly illustrated by historic record and the concurrent testimony derived from the present state of the civilized world, than, that no nation was ever free, or could be so, while subjected to a government constituted of a union of political and ecclesiastical powers: that no political despotism ever did or could long exist, unsustained by clerical influence: that no religion could be "pure and undefiled" when perverted to political purposes, and that no people could escape being depraved and miserable, when subjected to the double tyranny of spiritual and political power. Nor can a different result be rationally expected from the combined operation of church and state machinery; for it has generally happened that when political authority has been given to men whose *interest* and business calling is, to propagate their own religious creeds, they have ever been disposed to render their political influence subservient to their own views of religious duty, and have always exercised their political power to sustain their own particular *church* and *faith*, to the detriment and exclusion of all others. "In *some* instances," says the venerable and patriotic Madison, in his remonstrance to the legislature of Virginia, against a bill establishing a provision for teachers of the christian religion, "they (ecclesiastical establish-

ments) have been seen to erect a spiritual tyranny on the ruins of the civil authority: in *more* instances, they have been seen upholding the *thrones* of political tyranny; and in *no instance* have they been seen the guardians of the liberties of the people."

That the patriots of the American revolution, who adopted the State constitution of 1777, recognized the aforementioned evils, and intended to guard against them, is proved by the unequivocal phraseology of those provisions of that instrument which were intended to sever the union of church and state powers, and to protect the civil and religious liberties of their country; the thirty-eighth article of which said constitution is in the words following, viz: "And whereas we are required, by the benevolent principles of rational liberty, not only to expel civil tyranny, but also to guard against that spiritual oppression and intolerance wherewith the bigotry and ambition of weak and wicked priests and princes have scourged mankind: this convention doth further, in the name of the good people of this State, ordain, determine, and declare, that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall for ever hereafter be allowed within this State to all mankind."

Yet, notwithstanding so much care had been taken to guard against ecclesiastical encroachments, we find, in a very few years after the adoption of the first constitution of this State, priests were ushered into the halls of political legislation, not only (as we shall show) without legal authority, but in direct opposition to the spirit and express provisions of that instrument. This incipient step towards a union of religion and political legislation, is a measure but of recent date, and seems to have been introduced when the principles of our free republican government and the provisions of the constitution were not kept in view. Before the revolution, while New York was a

colony to a nation governed by a union of church and state powers, no provision was made by the provincial legislature for the support of chaplains, nor were any ever employed to officiate before that body. Such continued to be the case for a few years after the adoption of the constitution of 1777, no chaplain being appointed by either branch of the legislature. The precise time when they first *received a legislative call* to mingle religion and politics together, is not fully ascertained. But it is well understood that the practice was never authorized by any provision of the constitution, and for many years was destitute of any statutory enactment to sanction it: nor was it ever based on higher authority than the naked *resolutions* of the two branches of the legislature, each acting independently of the other, until the year 1829, when, by the Revised Statutes, first part, page 161, section seventh, chapter seventh, title sixth, the *pay* of chaplains was first prescribed by law, and priests thus recognized, as *if* they were legitimate and necessary appurtenances to the legislative department of the State.

The history of the incipient and successive measures, which resulted in the above mentioned statutory union of ecclesiastical and political concerns, is another illustration of the truth, that the least participation of clerical with civil authority, is dangerous to the liberties of the people; and proves the wisdom of the celebrated *Junius*, who strongly admonished his fellow citizens "never to suffer an invasion of their political constitution, however minute the instance might appear, to pass without a determined, persevering resistance. One precedent creates another. They soon accumulate and constitute law. What yesterday was fact, to day is doctrine. Examples are supposed to justify the most dangerous measures, and when they do not exactly suit, the defect is supplied by analogy. This is not the cause of faction, or of a party, or of an individual;

but the common interest of every man in the community."

The adoption and continuance of the practice under consideration, after the nullification of all laws uniting church and state, "and after the adoption of a constitution of civil government repugnant to it, both in its spirit and provisions, is no sufficient reason for its further continuance, nor proof of its harmless influence on the religious liberties of the people. So intimate an association of official legislative duties with religious forms and ceremonies, is a practical approximation to a union of church and state. The facility which it affords for the exercise of clerical influence in the legislative department of the government," militates against the equal rights of conscience, and also accounts for the existence and continuance of several other laws on our statute books, which actually trench on religious liberty, in contravention to those provisions of the constitution which were intended to repress the *evil spirit* of religious intolerance and persecution.

Your committee will now proceed to show that the legislature possesses no legitimate authority to associate religious prayers with legislative proceedings, nor to appoint legislative chaplains, nor to appropriate the public money to pay for any religious service: and because—

1st. No such authority has been delegated to them:—and,

2d. Because the exercise of such powers is not only repugnant to the constitution, but expressly interdicted by it.

It will not be denied, and hence not necessary to prove, that the legislature is vested with civil powers *only*; and have not been clothed with spiritual jurisdiction. Nor will it be requisite to inquire into the utility of religious prayers, or the obligation to pray, as a religious duty. "Religion is a concern between a man's conscience and his God, with which no human tribunal has a right to meddle." If prayer be

deemed an act of religious devotion, the legislature have no authority officially to perform it, nor to require others to do so, or to attend its performance. The people have not delegated power to the legislature to perform religious worship of any kind; and if prayers are acts of ecclesiastical character and of religious duty, legislative prayers are acts of supererogation; and legislative acts which transcend the powers delegated by the people to the legislature, are an official exercise of "power beyond the law," and as unauthorized as they would be if expressly interdicted by those provisions of the constitution which are intended to prevent an alliance of political and ecclesiastical powers, and to preserve the unrestrained exercise and enjoyment of religious opinion.

But the absence of legal authority is not the only objection to which the practice under consideration is obnoxious. It often interferes with the legitimate business of the legislature, and thus operates unpropitiously to the public interest. Some members of the legislature, like many of their constituents, conscientiously disapprove of prayers altogether; others are averse to *legislative* prayers; others again do not hold to prayers in *public places*; and amidst the congregated assembly of persons of various religious sects and adverse religious opinions, and who are elected without reference to their religious creeds, there are but few who can at any one time join heartily in the *service*. And the effect produced in the minds of such as are induced by courtesy, or are constrained by a species of legal coercion to attend legislative *prayer meetings*, is any thing but piety or "a praying spirit."

Mankind are generally averse to associate in religious devotion with any but those whose feelings and faith accord with their own; and although regard to the opinions of others may often induce some occasionally to listen with respectful attention to a sincere

suppliant; yet being, as many of the members of the legislature frequently are, annoyed by the repeated annunciation of sentiments out of harmony with their own; and finding at length their courtesy greatly overtaxed, their feeling constantly disobliged, and their convictions as often counteracted by attending prayers in which they have no *faith*, and with those with whom they cannot, consistently with their own *creeds*, have any religious communion or fellowship, they usually absent themselves from the legislative chambers until after the ecclesiastical business of the house shall have been concluded. Hence it is, that during prayer time, there is seldom more than a lean quorum in attendance, and often less. It was doubtless owing to the extended operation of the same cause, that on one occasion, during the present session, the *Speaker* adjourned the House of Assembly for want of a quorum to transact legislative business, although a great majority of the members were in and about the Capitol, and appeared in the legislative chamber in a very few minutes after the adjournment.

Having shown that *getting up* legislative religious prayers are inconsistent with the authority delegated to the legislature, unauthorized by the constitution, and hence an exercise of "powers beyond the law," it would seem superfluous to prove that the legislature have no legitimate power to appoint legislative chaplains.

If the right of the legislature to appoint chaplains to *pray* were to be admitted, the right to employ them to *preach* and *sing psalms* could not be denied. *All* are religious *services*, and are deemed by many to be religious *duties*. By the like assumed authority by which the legislature employ chaplains to *pray* at *one* time, they could employ them to do the like, or any other religious *service*, at *any other time*; on *Sunday* as well as on *any other day*; and at *one place* as well as *another*. If in the halls of legislation, why not *out* of them? If in the form of

prayer, why *not* in any other manner? What then could prevent their assuming authority to direct and regulate religious worship throughout the State? The *precedent* for such a measure is before them, and can be followed as legally, and with as much propriety as that which attaches to the example set by the State *Executive*, who, under his official proclamation, with the air of legality, the apparent *forms* of law, and the language of recommendation, prescribes the performance of religious worship on *fast* and *thanksgiving* days throughout the State.

After showing that the legislature possesses no legitimate power to associate religious devotion with legislative business proceedings, nor to appoint others to do so, it would seem to be superfluous to prove that it follows, as a necessary consequence, that they have no better warrant to take money from the public treasury to pay officers whom they have no right to appoint; or for *services* which they have no better authority officially to require. Yet your committee trust it will not be deemed obtrusive if they offer a few observations on the subject of the *pay* of chaplains with the money of the people.

It is well said, in several of the memorials on this subject, that "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" and that when priests or other persons are *hired* to do religious duty, or to render any other *service*, they ought, in justice, to be paid, if they require it: but justice also requires that they should be paid by those at whose instance, and for whose benefit their services may be rendered, and not from the public purse; nor from the pockets of individuals who neither require nor approve *public* prayers, nor any *hired* religious devotion. No person of mature understanding, who is acquainted with the principles of our government and the provisions of the constitution, will contend that the legislature have a right to enact a law expressly for the purpose of levying a direct tax on the

people to pay the wages of priests appointed to say *prayers*, or to perform any other kind of *religious service* for the legislature. Equally certain is it, that they have no better right to take money which has been paid by the people for legitimate objects, and apply it to purposes for which the legislature have no constitutional right to impose a tax.

Again: your committee will repeat, if the legislature have a right to grant the public money to such officers, for *religious services* performed for the legislature *within* the doors of the halls of legislation, they have equally as good (assumed) authority to grant like pay for like services performed *out* of the pale of the legislative chambers. And as the *will* and *pleasure* of the legislature are the only basis of all the measures and proceedings, against which your committee are reasoning, the same authority, with the same propriety, might, with equal justice, grant *per diem* pay for religious services performed under legislative auspices *any where* in the State.

Your committee would be willing here to close their remarks, were they not aware that there is an *evil spirit* abroad, seeking to infuse its baleful influence among the people, to obtain a dominant power in the civil government, through which to manage all the political concerns of the nation, and thus to establish ecclesiastical dominion on the ruins of our free republican institutions, and the civil and religious liberties of our country.

To stifle thought, to suppress the exercise of human reason, and to prevent the use of argument, the name of God and of religion have often been profanely used to excite hostility and denunciation against *all* who oppose clerical domination, or any measures tending to a union of church and state, or who dare evince moral courage sufficient to exercise the rights of conscience, and maintain the freedom of opinion and the right of free discussion.

In opposition to the view which your committee have taken of the subject of the present report, it may again, as with like intent it often has been said, "*that the United States are a nation of christians; that christianity is the law of the land, and that all are infidels who disbelieve this doctrine or oppose it.*"

Were it true that christianity, as such, is the law of the land, because a majority of the people are professing christians, it would be indispensable that every citizen should know *what christianity is*; because *all* ought to know the law, who are required to obey it. It would become essential then to ascertain what particular *creed*, of the seventy different christian sects, is to be respected as the law of the land, and by which the other *sixty-nine* would be held as illegal.

To settle this question, would require the united effort of church and state. A religious inquisition would thence be indispensable; and all the horrid scenes of the darker ages, when ecclesiastical power reigned triumphant, would be again reacted. Our "happy land" would be, as other nations have been, the bloody arena of religious strife and church and state contention. The advocates of the mis-called christian *law*, would discuss its merits and its claims "sword in hand;" and *fire* and *faggot*, the *rack* and the *wheel*, would be used to prove the *truth*, enforce *conviction*, and to make converts to the *faith* sustained by the prevailing influence of such irresistible means of "adding to the church such as would be saved" from the power and tender mercies of the *holy office*, and the purifying flames of a religious *auto de fe*!

But to many honest and sincere *professors* of christianity, it ought to be a source of felicitation, that "the kingdom of Christ is not of this world;" and that the precepts and doctrines of *Jesus* are not "the law of the land:" for were they so, "prayers in *public places*" would be by law interdicted

and suppressed; and men would be obliged, "*when they pray, to go into their closets and shut the doors and pray in secret.*" And those who profess to be sent by God, to "go throughout all the earth and teach the gospel to every creature, without money and without price," would not be allowed by *law* to take *pay* for preaching or for *prayers*: nor would the people be *taxed* to pay *hire* for the performance of any religious *duty*. And were the precepts and doctrines of *Jesus* and his apostles, to be regarded as "*the law of the land*," none would be obliged, as by *statute law* they now are *against their religious faith*, to observe a religious Sabbath day, nor to respect "one day more *holy* than another." And all those who, instigated by an *evil spirit* of intolerance and persecution, denounce, backbite, and traduce those who *believe* in the truth and justice of the precepts and doctrines just alluded to, would be regarded as *hypocrites* and *infidels* to primitive christianity, and violaters of "*the law of the land.*"

But it is not true that christianity, as such, is the law of the land. The constitution is the *supreme* law of the land; by virtue of which the *mosque*, the *synagogue*, the *christian church*, and all other churches and religions are placed on equal grounds. It makes no discrimination between them, nor allows any preference to be given by law to any or either of them. It prohibits none—protects all, but permits no religious creed to be enforced as the law of the land. Hence the law of the land is, that *no* religious creed, as such, can be recognized as the law of the State: that "all mankind," and therefore every individual "within this State," have an equal and unalienable right to "*believe* according to the dictates of their understanding," and no person, nor "human tribunal," has a right to use the name of *God* or *religion* to make men afraid to avow their honest and conscientious opinions, or in any way to coerce them to act the *hypocrite*, with a view to escape the

wrath, or to propitiate the *evil spirit* of religious intolerance and persecution, which is denounced in the christian books, and interdicted by the constitution of this State, both of which place clergymen precisely in that situation which was recognized and approved by their great and acknowledged master. Neither he nor his apostles entered the halls of legislation, except when forced there by his persecutors; nor did he or his disciples ever claim or aspire to participate in the business of civil government, nor assume to be "judges or dividers in Israel." On the contrary, they shunned the political world, as a source of contamination, tending to abstract the mind from the study and pursuit of eternal truth, and to pollute it with views and interests incompatible with their clerical vocation. They therefore neither sought nor received political aid, nor the pecuniary emoluments attached to services unknown to them, but which, in the revolution of time and events, have been sought and obtained by their successors.

The result of all the foregoing facts and arguments is, that your committee have arrived to the most satisfactory conclusion, that the association of ecclesiastical duties with political legislative proceedings, is unauthorised by any power delegated by the people—is incompatible with the character of a free government, predicated on the principle of equal rights—uncongenial with the spirit and provisions of the constitution of this state—and that the practice ought therefore to be abolished. That to appoint priests to the office of legislative chaplains, is to appoint them to ecclesiastical or civil office. The former is unauthorised, and the latter expressly interdicted by the constitution, and ought not in future to be repeated. That to take the people's money to pay for religious prayers or any religious service, transcends the legitimate power of the legislature no less than would a statute law, if enacted expressly to

levy a tax on the people for such purposes.

Your committee, therefore, are of opinion, that so much of the statute laws of this State as prescribe and allow chaplains to be paid out of the public funds, for the performance of religious services or duties, are unconstitutional, and ought to be expunged from the statute books of this State. For which purpose, the chairman of your committee some time since brought in a bill.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

The following extracts are copied from an Address of Levi Woodbury, (now Secretary of the Navy,) delivered before the *Mechanic Association*, at Portsmouth, New-Hampshire.

"We live in such an era of wonders, that neither the occasion, nor the age can be duly estimated without some analysis. Looking at home, or abroad, it seems an age of excitement, scarcely less universal than the elements of Heaven; an age sleepless as the tides: daring every thing,—despairing at nothing. The perverse metaphysics of darker times having vanished, the human mind has long gazed on the truths of nature and revelation, free from the clouds and shackles of by-gone systems, and the consequence has been that the idols of false philosophy, in the groves and academies of civilized life, as well as the idols of false religion, even in the barbarous isles of the remotest oceans, have alike become prostrated. A still bolder spirit has followed in that train, and penetrated to the inmost recesses of political power. The face of human society, in respect to government, has been breathed upon by an agency much purer, if not holier. Man is becoming known, and treated as neither more nor less than man. His equal rights to life, liberty, and property, are more generally recognized; and it lives no longer in Utopia alone, that he may both possess and practice those equal rights in perfect safety. Increased knowledge has given, guided and con-

secrated this increased power. And whether on the banks of the Vistula, or the Seine, or the Rhine, the Thames, or the Potomac,—wherever knowledge has become widely diffused through all ranks of society, there the decree has gone forth, that kings must cease to reign merely by divine right, and that the energies and influence of the whole population, having pervaded the whole institutions of society, there, as an inevitable effect, tyranny, in every shape abhorred, civil, religious, or political, must, ere long, crumble into dust.—The mind and the soul, when thus enlightened, cannot but burn with constant aspirations for the freedom and elevation designed by the Almighty power, from whence they are an humble emanation; and neither the consciences, nor the labors, nor the possessions, nor the hopes, of such renovated beings, can they long consent to place at the mere mercy or caprice of others, when by improvements in government, they have become enabled to hold all they value highly by a tenure, sure and strong as human frailty can fabricate.

The majority of any community thus enlightened, and thus feeling, have in their very nature, such a power embodied, that their mere will, or wish to be free, is often enough to accomplish their intents, accomplish them too, with the certainty, (though I admit, not always with the speed, or ease,) of the changes of seasons, and the revolutions of the planets. This is the great secret and cause of almost every permanent reform or revolution in modern times. The only possible danger in such reforms and revolutions, arises from the want of sufficient intelligence in the mass of society, to exercise wisely the sovereign power: and consequently the only safe bulwark against this danger, consists in making power and intelligence advance with equal footsteps in successful efforts, like those of this association, and other kindred institutions of the times, to pour useful instruction into the ears of mankind generally.

[From the *Christian Intelligencer*.]

FRIENDSHIP.

“The world without a friend is but a wilderness”—aye, and not a place of darkness and solitude only, but a wilderness rendered hideous by ravenous beasts in human forms, crying “havoc and death,” and seeking to circumvent the lonesome wanderer under the cover of its own darkness. A person doomed to move in a community where no countenance beams upon him in the smiles of a pure and sincere friendship, towards whom no brother’s hand is extended in generous love, is, of all situations, in the most desolate and solitary. Better would he do, to seek a retreat in some dismal prison, where, at least there would be none to deride his misery, than to exist amidst such a “wilderness” of human forms and unfeeling hearts. Some philosophers have doubted whether any thing like friendship existed among men, any farther than tokens of sympathy and regard were called forth by considerations of self-interest or personal advantage. We cannot, we will not, subscribe to such a calumny on the human heart; such a reflection on the noblest work of God. Man was made to be a social being. From the first, his Creator saw and declared that it was not good for him to be alone. Without society, his better powers and faculties; there being no occasion for their exercise—pine away and die, and the purpose of his being is thwarted.

There is in the human heart, the natural principles of which are not corrupted by a false education or base passions, a sentiment that attaches man to man, and makes our own felicity consist in the happiness of others. There are chords in the human soul which vibrate at the mention of others “weal or woe.” Few breasts, we trust in God, are so depraved and cold, as not to sympathize with generous emotions at the misfortunes of those around them. And this sympathy,—honourable to human nature,—lies at the foundation of social love and happiness.

Friendship is the sun of social life,

without which all is dark, cold, gloomy and cheerless as the grave. It is a principle which should be cherished and cultivated with constant effort. He who neglects it is justly regarded as a monster—a nuisance. You see it in the civilized man and the savage. It is this which exalts man to a resemblance of his Maker.

But, says the wise man, 'He that hath friends, must show himself friendly.'

Friendship is a delicate thread which may be broken by a frown;—an obligation, which may easily be dissolved. The condition of its continuance is that it remains mutual. The mere selfish man—he who often receives but never bestows the testimonies of friendship, will soon find himself in a "wilderness," at once horrible and dangerous. Let, then, we say, every manifestation of this virtue, be met by a prompt return of a kindred feeling and effort. Let the emulation be—not who shall receive, but who shall give the most substantial evidences of mutual regard and good will.

But there are some on whom the acts of hospitality and friendship appear to be bestowed in vain. From every manifestation of kindness they borrow the assurance to become more pressing in their demands, and more inflated in their demeanor. A man who will make large drafts on the friendship of his brother, and not realize his obligation to render a generous return for the kindness,—who will appear friendly while in the presence of his host, and behind him will circulate reports to his injury and seek his destruction—and that such persons there are we know and do testify—such a man is unworthy of respect or confidence, and is in danger of forfeiting the favor, not only of those whom he thus abuses, but of society at large. He should know that "a man that hath friends, must show himself friendly," or e'er long it will be said of him he hath friends no longer, and the world, to him, has become a wilderness.

Ingratitude, envy, jealousy, and all

the unholy passions which are begotten by such things, will ultimately bring down upon their possessors that punishment which they merit. On the contrary, a disposition to make reciprocal the pledges and acts of friendship, will never fail to make durable a title to the esteem, respect, confidence and friendship of society.

Who holds a friend, should have a heart
Himself well furnish'd for the part,

And ready on occasion,
To show the virtue that he seeks;
For, 'tis an union, that bespeaks

A just reciprocation. COWPER.

THE FOUNDATION OF TRUE HAPPINESS.

[The following remarks are copied from a communication in the Hempstead (L. I.) Inquirer. It appears by the signature to have been written by a woman.]

All those schemes and expectations of happiness which fall short of *Heaven*, are unsound and futile. The man or woman whose mind is properly disciplined by pure and undefiled religion; who has learned to regard every dispensation of Providence as ordered by infinite mercy and unerring wisdom; whose heart is expanded with gratitude to the Deity, and whose mind is ever open to contemplate and adore his perfections, has found the true spring of happiness. No man ever understood the character of his Creator, without wishing in some humble manner, to imitate it; and in proportion as he attains this similitude, he will find himself advanced in the scale of true and rational enjoyment. I would give more for that temper of mind, which would enable me to say under every trial, in the very depths of adversity, as well as in the full glow of prosperity, "*Thy will be done*," than for all that human ambition ever coveted or obtained. I do not wish for the insensibility of the Stoic, but the resignation of the Christian. There is something supremely lovely in the life and character of Christ, as exhibited throughout the whole of his mission on earth, which none can read without admiring. In

him, human nature attained its highest point of perfection, and though in this world, we can only follow his footsteps at a distance, we may lawfully anticipate a state of existence, where we shall be complete in the likeness of God. The principles which he taught compose the greatest scheme of benevolence ever exhibited, and I think fully teaches us, that "to do good and communicate," is the highest happiness of created intelligence. And can we wonder that a principle, so directly opposed to the selfishness of man's heart, has seldom found an advocate in his breast. "He who knew what was in man," hath said truly, that love to God and man, must renovate the soul, ere a sentiment so exalted can find a place within it. May their influences descend on us, and guide us in the only true path to happiness and immortality.

MOTIVES FOR HUMILITY.

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—1 Cor. iv. 7.

These words of the Apostle Paul are a strong persuasive against being lifted up on account of any supposed virtues or amiableness of disposition we may possess, while they serve to show us that we ought not to be tried or become impatient at the ill tempers and untoward conduct of others; for we should consider *who made us to differ from such persons*. If we are better it is cause of gratitude and thankfulness, not of exultation and unmercifulness towards those who are ill disposed, and of a perverse and froward disposition.

We ought, indeed, never to be put out of patience, or become irritated, however perverse, obstinate, or mischievous any one may be. If we refuse to bear with patience his froward conduct, would it not be just with God to leave us, as a punishment, to become like unto him. Our different dispositions are often the gift of God, and if he has in his merciful dealings towards us, seen fit to give us a kind, benevolent,

and obliging disposition, we cannot be too thankful for such a favour, and it is but a small return of gratitude to be willing to bear with those, who in their behaviour and conduct, are just the reverse of such a spirit, and who do every thing in their power to annoy, distress, and disquiet us. For certainly it is better to bear and suffer such treatment and usage from others, than to have a disposition to treat others in such a way ourselves. This we should consider, and reflect upon when we are ready to be provoked and tried by evil disposed persons, and are almost tempted to exercise severity towards them, on account of the unreasonable, unjust, and unrighteous manner with which they treat us.

THE SEA OF GLASS.—Rev. xv. 2.

A late writer on the prophecies, observes:

"The sea of glass represents the everlasting gospel—pure, clear, transparent, solid, and mingled with fire. And we can see the important necessity of knowing what is meant by the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name: for none but those who have obtained a victory over these, will stand on the sea of glass. If I am not widely mistaken in the plain and simple meaning of God's word, none but those who obtain a victory over a sectarian *spirit*, *governments*, and *names*, will stand on this sea of glass. These schisms in Christ's body are too plainly true, and lamentably incurable by human power; for human corruption has been the procuring cause, and will be found supporting and defending them until the master of the house will call his servants to a reckoning.

"The Church can never renovate itself, but she could lay down her party names, and cease to prosecute a brother for believing the sacred oracles for himself. It seems to be the doom of the Church, either Jew or Gentile, when once a departure takes place from primitive purity and simplicity,

that they never regain what is lost—never regain a lost step—never renovate themselves; but, by gradual and imperceptible degrees, become more corrupt and more self-righteous, until they are like salt which has lost its savour, or like a useless scroll which is rolled together and laid aside: and this is soon to be the awful and unavoidable destiny of the present Church. The priesthood are the wretched, erring, fallible beings, who have twice been intrusted with God's heritage, and have as often turned it into a den of thieves; and I am disposed to think the present Gentile churches have abused and corrupted the dispensation committed to them, as bad, if not worse, than the Jewish nation.

“And think ye, that those of us who may be found closing the present dispensation will meet the plaudits of the Judge? Think ye, the present is to close with the sacred *Te Deum*? with a pompous procession into a new theatre of action? that the present gospel drama will be wound up with a resounding approbation of ‘well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?’ Oh no. If we are lulling ourselves with opiates; feeding ourselves with the prospects of being wafted into the millennium by a gentle gale—if these are our calculations, how terrible and fatal the disappointment we are securing unto ourselves! for, ere it be long, we shall be roused from our slumbers by the mighty crush of thrones, and the tremendous convulsions of civil, as well as ecclesiastical domination. Is the terrible figures and metaphors used in the sacred oracles, respecting the introduction of the millennium, calculated to fill the mind with images of peace? Are there nothing to be dreaded in those mighty events which lie before us, prefigured by the most alarming metaphors in nature? Do figures ever exceed the things prefigured? Would the God of truth sound a needless alarm? Will he sound an alarm of war, and spread a banquet of peace?

The words of prophecy compel me to believe that the present dispensation will soon close, and that too with the most signal judgments of Heaven—with the fall of Mystery Babylon—the utter overthrow of all anti-christian authority, with the infliction of all the judgments and plagues spoken of in the Revelation.”

The same writer, when speaking of the confessions of faith and books of discipline among the various sects, says:

“If these confessions and books of discipline contain things which are not in the Bible, they are dangerous, and should be rejected. If they contain nothing but what is in the Bible, they are superfluous or needless. It may be said, the matter is brought within a shorter compass: I have never found the Bible too long nor too short, too broad or too narrow. It may be said, that things may be made more plain. Does God need an interpreter, when he speaks to his own creatures? Will human wisdom make things plainer than divine inspiration?

“But, it is said, for the sake of producing uniformity in the church, a test or creed may be admitted. Can we expect tests and creeds to do more than the Bible has done? Is truth more powerful in a Confession, than it is when coming out of the Bible? If the Church could sustain three hundred years of persecution without a confession, where is the necessity in time of her prosperity. But prosperity brought in corruption, and corruption brought in confessions of faith, or spiritual laws, to which they could affix a penalty, which could not be done to the Bible: for God claims the right of avenging himself. But men, more wise than their Maker, couple the severest penalties to their spiritual laws; and punish with imprisonment, stripes, and death, unfortunate offenders against their creeds and church tests. Thus they originated in corruption, and in presumption have they been preserved. And how have they rent and torn the body of Christ into a thousand parts:

what jealousies, railings, and backbitings.

"These creeds form rallying points for sectarianism. They form banners or mottoes, under which christians are marshalled against christians. They form insuperable bars against God's people, which but for sectarian names and creeds, would never be known, or if known, would soon pass away with the passing generation. But under the influence of things, like bars formed by opposing currents, they gather strength with time; and we transmit to posterity party names and party antipathies; and the first impressions made on the mind of the rising generation is, that of disgust and abhorrence towards another party of christians, who may differ in a few items of faith about the same Lord and Master of them all. Sectarianism is preached instead of Christ—and it is wonderful to see how they will bring the Lord into each side of the dispute. They will hurl on each other the anathemas of the gospel, with all the dexterity of blind infallibility. And sectarian zeal imposes itself on the credulity of mankind for a zeal of the Lord's house. May I not say, a zeal for human institutions crucified the Lord of Glory; a zeal for human institutions persecuted, unto death, thousands of Christ's best followers, during the first ages of christianity, and, since that time, what but a zeal to maintain the spiritual laws of corrupt churches, has drenched the christian world in blood.

"If the Church be the house of God—the body of Christ—is it not presumption in ignorant, fallible men to make laws for God's house? If the Bible cannot govern the Church, it must be deficient. If it can govern, it must be the best. But the churches will set up a law of their own, and say it is just like the laws of the Lord, and with as much propriety, too, as the goldsmith or founder will make an image of the invisible God, and say, it is just like the being which it represents; and so will fall down and wor-

ship a god of his own make, with as much, or more devotion than he will the invisible Creator. So, in this day, men will manifest as much devotion to a book of discipline or confession of faith as they will to the Bible itself."

THE DISPENSATION OF MEANS AND HUMAN AGENCY.

Under the gospel dispensation, there was to be a dispensation of means, and of human effort and agency, in promoting the cause of Christ, until the time arrives mentioned in Daniel, when the *stone is cut out without hands*. Human means and human agency, in promoting the cause and kingdom of Christ, will then gradually fall into disuse, and at length wholly cease among the people of God; in the same manner as the Jewish sacrifices, rites and observances were laid aside after the coming of Christ, on account of their weakness, unprofitableness, and even injurious tendency.

The present way, manner and method, of promoting the cause of christianity, have, indeed, nearly fulfilled their allotted period of existence, and will soon sink into disuse, and be wholly laid aside, by reason of their unprofitableness, and even worse than unprofitableness among mankind, as well as their unsuitableness to that better and more advanced state of things in christianity, which has been foretold, when the Lord will teach his people himself, and wholly rule and govern in their hearts. For, though the Jewish rites and observances were once enjoined, and ought to be observed, and had had their use, yet when they had fulfilled their period of time, like an old garment, they ceased to be useful any longer; and indeed their continuance was then not only improper, but even pernicious, and effectually hindered persons from coming into, or continuing in, a right state. Hence this language of the Apostle—"I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," though circumcision had been enjoined and long practised. The apos-

the further says, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace." Again, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years, [after the dispensation of the law now to cease:] I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Galatians, chapter 4th.

Just so it will be in the christian world a little time hence, in respect to many things right and proper, under the dispensation of means. For the time is at hand, when those who join themselves to a sect, go to meetings, and follow the outward observances and usages now practised in christendom, will be so far from being profited, that they will never be able to attain to a right state, any more than those Jews who continued to follow the rites and observances of the Mosaic dispensation, after the coming of the more perfect dispensation of the gospel; inasmuch as it will be rejecting that more excellent and better way which the Lord has promised, and will then establish, and be trusting to, and resting in, the weak, useless, and corrupt performances now so much esteemed and followed by professing christians, but which, like the Jewish rites and observances, can never make the comers thereunto perfect, or bring people into a right state. For a more glorious and better condition of things is promised under the gospel, when these now vain, and by reason of their multiplicity, burdensome services will be laid aside, and when all shall be taught of God, and have his laws written in their minds. See Heb. x. 16, and Jer. xxxi. 34, as follows, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

No words could declare more fully than the preceding, that at the time to which there is here an allusion, all preaching and meeting together for instruction, will cease, inasmuch as there will be no occasion for such usages and practices; "for all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest," and they will obtain this knowledge from a better source than from man, or from any human agency or means whatever: for it is said *they shall be all taught of God.*

There is another passage in Zechariah, chap. xiii. which plainly shows that in the latter times, all preaching (like the practised rites and ordinances of the law in Christ's time) will become so perverted, corrupt and pernicious, as to be wholly laid aside, and brought to nought. In the passage alluded to, the prophet when speaking of the latter times, says:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy,* then his father and mother that begat him [and who will feel a greater interest in his welfare and good conduct than any other persons] shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live, [in this wrong and pernicious way,] for thou speakest lies [or teachest what is false and injurious to mankind, causing divisions and strife among them] in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him, shall thrust him through [with conviction of his wrong and injurious way by their remonstrance, and faithful rebuke] when he prophesieth.— And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets [or preachers] shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied, [for the uselessness, and even perniciousness of

*The word *prophesy* when spelt *sy*, always means in scripture to teach or preach. When used to denote the foretelling of future events, it is uniformly spelt *cy*.

preaching, at this time, will be almost generally seen, and the abuses, corruptions, and mercenary and sectarian character of the trade of modern preaching, will be fully understood by every unprejudiced mind;] neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive, [or adopt a particular dress to appear as a priest or teacher, since such a character at this time, will lose all respect, and be odious among men, by reason of the injury which persons of this calling have manifestly done in the christian world, causing divisions, strife and contention among the disciples of Christ:] but he shall say, [after conviction has been brought home to his mind by those who truly desired his welfare,] I am no prophet, I am an husbandman [following an honest calling,] for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth [for an honest and useful calling, will now only be reputable in the christian world.] And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands, [that thou art no longer active in the work of teaching?] Then he shall answer, *Those with which I was wounded [in the way of conviction,] in the house of my friends* [who desired my welfare.]

The foregoing is the plain and obvious meaning of this important prophecy in Zechariah.

The dispensation of means, in all its varied and multiplied ways, with preaching, assembling together, &c. has now been going on better than 1800 years, without producing that desirable result among mankind, which many had anticipated from those means. And all those means and human efforts for promoting and building up the cause of Christ, are at present more corrupted, and are more inefficacious in making mankind better than they ever were before. Indeed, they are now conducted in such a manner, and practised in such a spirit, that like the religious observances among the Jews, in our Saviour's time, they only tend, effectually to hinder people from ever coming into a right state, instead of bringing them into such a state. Hence,

ere long, the Lord will bring them all into disrepute and disuse among his people, in the same manner as he did the corrupted rites and observances of the Mosaic dispensation, together with the doctrines and traditions blended with them by the religious teachers and rulers among the Jews. For what are now called the ordinances of christianity, and the means of grace, with all the human efforts and associations employed for building up the kingdom of Christ, are only stumbling-blocks in the way of God's people, and will shortly be removed out of the way; and the Lord himself will be the shepherd of his flock; and there will then be but *one shepherd* and *one fold*, instead of so many folds, sects, and divisions, and such numerous shepherds or teachers, keeping up those sects and divisions, and causing them to wrangle, strive and contend one with another. For it is foretold, Zech. xiv. 9, that in that day, "The Lord shall be king over all the earth;" that "there shall be one Lord, and his name one."

Look at the many shepherds at this time, and the numerous folds or sects which exist, and then observe the wrangling, contention, and striving for mastery among them, and reflect whether there can be any true christianity, or even righteousness in any, or all these things. Did not the Apostle plainly intimate to the Corinthians, that they were carnal, and walked as men, while (without, however, any open separation or division) one declared his preference for Paul, another for Apollos, another for Cephas, and another for Christ. The spirit which engendered even these preferences, and the contentions which grew out of them, were wholly inconsistent with that harmony and oneness of feeling which true christianity, when enjoyed in the heart, must ever produce. How much more inconsistent and contrary to christianity must it be, when there is an open and entire separation among those who profess to be christians, so that they do not even assemble or meet together, but en-

deavour to undermine and destroy one another.

Whatever has been promised and foretold, will assuredly come to pass, however we may disbelieve it, or oppose it: and the scriptures abundantly declare, that such an advancement in the state and condition of christianity as has been described, will arrive, when *all shall know the Lord*, and when there shall be *nothing to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain*. But when this more pure and better condition of christianity begins to appear on the earth, freed from all the human clogs, devices, and useless appendages now attached to it, it will meet with the same reception and opposition from the great mass of professing christians as the first introduction of christianity did from the Jews. Any change from common and long standing usages and practices, particularly that of a religious kind, is always opposed, and viewed as wrong and improper. The exemption from numerous outward religious usages and performances which the gospel brought, was by no means approved or considered right by those who had been accustomed to perform those usages. Hence the inquiry which they put to Christ, Luke vi. 33, "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?" After showing them the unsuitableness and impropriety of attempting to blend the things of the new dispensation with those of the law and other usages of that day, Christ gave them to understand, that it was only in accordance with human nature and the disposition of man, to disapprove and to be opposed to any new course or way in religion, and to view it as not equal to the one to which they have been accustomed—saying to them, in application to the inquiry made to him, "No man having drunk old wine [or having long followed a particular way and form of religion] straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."

We find this to be universally true. No people long accustomed to certain principles and practices of religion can readily be brought to change them, or to think that any others are as good, however better they may afterwards be proved to be.

But the Lord himself will bring about that important change in the condition of things which is, ere long, to take place, without the aid and assistance of man, as in other changes heretofore; for it is foretold, that the kingdom which is set up under the name of the *stone* in the days of the present existing kingdoms of Europe, and which in a little time is to *fill the whole earth*, will *be cut out without hands*, or, in other words, no human aid or assistance will be employed in commencing or completing it.

This important event is described, also, in other parts of Scripture, as the alone work of the Lord, without any agency or help from man whatever—mankind having altogether corrupted their way, and being incapable of rendering any assistance in the important work of establishing the kingdom and reign of Christ on the earth. See Isa. lix. 14, 15, 16—lxiii. 3, 5, as follows: "And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." "I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me: for the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation," &c. Prophecy abundantly shows that it will be in the midst of the greatest calamities and miseries (sent upon the earth

for the wickedness therein) that the glorious salvation and redemption promised in Scripture will be brought about. It will be in the latter part of the judgments of the seven vials.

DIVINE GRACE AND FAITH.

Great disputes have arisen concerning whether faith precedes or follows after the operations of divine grace on the heart. It is certain that both faith and grace are of God, for power must be given us to believe, or we can never believe with the heart unto righteousness. All the outward evidences that can be given will not produce a saving faith in the mind of an individual, else who so likely to have had faith as the Jews, who saw the miracles and works of Christ. Grace and faith, therefore, are nearly the same, since without grace, all the evidences in the world will avail nothing towards producing a true faith, and where there is true faith there must always be grace.

Hence as the Apostle has said, *By grace are we saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.* The grace by which we believe, "is the gift of God: but the *grace* or *power* to believe, and the *act* of believing, are too different things; the latter being the act of man, through the grace or ability given to him of God. Without this grace or ability to believe, no man ever did or can believe." Hence the Apostle calls believers God's *workmanship*, God's *husbandry*, and God's *building*, because created, nourished, and built up through faith, by means of the power and ability given unto man from God.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

By letters, communications, and pamphlets, received from various parts, it appears there is at the present time great dissatisfaction, turmoils, and shakings among most of the sects in our own country, as if the words quoted by the Apostle, Heb. xiii. 26, were about to be fulfilled, viz: "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." The shaking here alluded to, we are told, is prepara-

tory to the "removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." It is therefore no doubt right, and in the order of providence, that this shaking should take place; for much there is to be removed to make room for that which is substantially good and right. During this state of things, however, we are called to great watchfulness and a close examination of our own spirit, as well as the course we are following, lest we be drawn away from the right path, and become perverted and led into a wrong spirit, by the powerful influences and operations which are now going on in the world, and which have only begun.

Favours.—Bestowing *one* favour on some men they think is giving them the right to ask a second—the first they look upon as a gift—the rest are payments.

[*Star in the West.*]

[*From the New-York Sentinel.*]

CHOLERA IN PERSIA.—According to late accounts from the frontiers of Persia, the plague and cholera had hardly begun to subside in that country. In some provinces those formidable diseases had carried off more than two-thirds of the population. The province of Ghillan appears to have been among the greatest sufferers. Out of a population of 300,000, only 60,000 men, and 40,000 women and children remained. The eggs of the silk worms have been completely destroyed there, and it was calculated that it would take seven years to produce the same quantity of worms as formerly. Before the arrival of these diseases, the revenue of Ghillan was usually framed at 350,000 tomanus. Since then, no more than 80,000 tomanus could be obtained.

Cholera in Egypt.—"Letters from Cairo," says the Episcopal Recorder, "state that 60,000 had died in two months in that city, of cholera. Its duration is every where about six weeks, or two months. Alexandria has been desolated by it, and we learn it has again appeared on the coast of Syria. In Europe it is gradually overspreading Germany."

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